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ABSTRACT

While Latinos make up approximately 9 percent of the total population of the United States, they comprise over 25 percent of California's population. Although over half of Latino American women have entered the workforce, a severe family and child poverty rate persists. Since 1990, through a project called "El Comienzo" ("The Beginning"), California's community-based child care resource and referral agencies have been attempting to improve delivery of child care services for young Latino children. The California Child Care Resource and Referral Network is a nonprofit organization that serves 60 agencies. El Comienzo is an outgrowth of the network's California Child Care Initiative, focusing on family day care. Currently, El Comienzo is embarking on a new national phase of activity, providing training and technical assistance to groups attempting to improve quality of family day care services serving Latinos. This report reviews the project's history and serves as a guide to help future implementation of Latino-based child care initiatives. The report sections are: (1) "Guiding Principles"; (2) "Resource Publications for Recruitment and Training"; (3) "Site Selection and Project Management," including support and coordination of sites, fundraising, and training; (4) "Project Activities"; and (5) "Observations and Conclusions." (BGC)

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Developing Family Day Care In Latino Communities:

Experiences of the California Child Care Initiative

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A Publication Of
The California Child Care Initiative Project

California Child Care Resource & Referral Network

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DEVELOPING FAMILY DAY CARE IN LATINO COMMUNITIES

Experiences of The California Child Care Initiative

August 1995

A Publication of the California Child Care Initiative Project

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Although all the study participants, advisors, editors, and reviewers contributed greatly to this work, the Network alone is responsible for any errors or misstatements that the text may include.

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Introduction

Ready or not, we are in the midst of a demographic revolution. It's no accident that a recent best-selling novel called *Typical American* described the lives of Californians born in China, not white Americans of European descent. Slowly or quickly, nearly every community in the nation is awakening to the challenges and opportunities of an ever-broadening range of U.S. diversity. In the past two decades, no sector has grown faster than the Latino population of the United States, and nowhere has this change been more dramatic than in California.

One in three Latinos in the United States now calls California home; another third is concentrated in the three states of Texas, New York and Florida. While Latinos make up roughly nine percent of our national total, they comprise over 25 percent of California's population, and these figures are expected to keep rising sharply as we enter the 21st century. Latinos in the U.S. are also youthful: while only 7.5 percent of non-Latino white Americans are under the age of five, 11 percent of Latinos and over 12 percent of Mexican-Americans fall in this age group. Birth rates are over one-third higher for Latino women than for non-Latino whites. And Latino families face particularly strong economic challenges. Although more than half of all Latino American women have entered the work force, a severe rate of family and child poverty persists: Latinos in the U.S. under the age of 18 remain three times as likely to be living in poverty as non-Latino children.[1]

All of these changes carry enormous implications about the delivery of child care services for the very youngest of children–not only in California, but throughout the country. Who is taking care of our children? Is child care accessible and affordable to the many kinds of families who need it? Do programs reflect and honor the diverse cultures and home languages of children in the areas they serve? Do members of minority communities have access to the training and other services–*in their own primary languages*–that will help them become child care providers, and succeed in such a demanding field?

Since 1990, in a project called El Comienzo–The Beginning–California's community-based child care resource and referral agencies have been taking up the challenge. Resource and referral agencies (R&Rs) are an integral part of the state's child care system; for nearly twenty years, state funds have been available to provide R&R services which include helping parents find child care, documenting community child care needs, and offering assistance to new and existing providers of care. The California Child Care Resource and Referral Network–hereafter called the Network–is a nonprofit or-

Latinos in the U.S. under the age of 18 remain three times as likely to be living in poverty as non-Latino children.

Do programs reflect and honor the diverse cultures and home languages of children in the areas they serve?

[1] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *The Hispanic Population in the United States: March 1993* (1994), *Hispanic Americans Today* (1993) and *Profiles of the Hispanic Population: Selected Characteristics by Hispanic Origin* (1990)

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ganization that represents and serves 60 agencies in the 58 counties of the state.

El Comienzo is an outgrowth of the Network's California Child Care Initiative, a highly successful public/private partnership that has been recruiting and training family day care providers in communities throughout California since 1985.[2] The Initiative chose to focus on family day care–the care of a group of children in a provider's own home–because it is the most widely used form of child care in the United States. The project has pioneered a five-part family day care supply-building model which:

assesses local child care supply and demand, and targets shortages of care in specific geographic areas;

recruits interested individuals who have the potential to become licensed family day care providers;

trains these individuals to provide quality care and to manage a small business effectively;

provides technical assistance to help them get licensed and started; and

offers ongoing support to help them stay in operation.

Thus far, the El Comienzo Project has recruited 311 new licensed Spanish-speaking providers, creating new child care spaces for 1,055 children, and has held Spanish-language training events attended by more than 5,500 participants.

But as local R&R agencies implemented Initiative programs in their communities, they recognized ever-growing needs to develop culturally and linguistically appropriate services for non-English-speaking and minority children and providers alike. The most critical needs by far were for Spanish-language training materials and services. And since California's Latino population is itself very diverse, representing over a dozen countries of origin, a Latino-based project would also need to reflect this "internal" diversity.

In response, the Network and its member agencies launched El Comienzo, a multi-year program that has focused on the family day care needs of California's Latino communities. El Comienzo has developed a coordinated package of Spanish-language recruitment and training materials, and has conducted thirteen community-based demonstration projects throughout the state. Thus far, the project has recruited 311 new licensed Spanish-speaking providers, creating new child care spaces for 1,055 children, and has held Spanish-language training events attended by more than 5,500 participants.

Now, El Comienzo is embarking on a new national phase of activity, providing training and technical assistance to a variety of state, regional and local groups who seek to address the lack of quality family day care services serving the Latino population.

This report is intended not only as a review of the project's experience thus far, but as a look toward the future--a guide that can help others to implement a Latino-based child care initiative of their own. We welcome the opportunity to assist such initiatives in any way we can.

[2]. While this Report uses the term "family day care," which is still the officially-used term for licensing purposes in California and many states, we note that providers and others in the field are increasingly using the term "family child care" to describe this service.

CHAPTER 1

Guiding Principles

In recent years, researchers in child development have begun to emphasize how critical it is for early childhood environments to value and reinforce children's home languages and cultures.[1] And meanwhile, the number of Americans for whom English is a second language has been growing so fast in California and many states that populations once dismissed as "minorities" are becoming a new majority. Overall, however, we in the child care field have lagged behind in developing effective strategies and resources to reach bilingual and non-English-speaking communities.

Latino parents have now begun to offer some guidance themselves. In a recent national study of their child care preferences and choices, Latino families showed a strong inclination toward home-based, informal situations–especially care provided by relatives or neighbors–rather than center-based programs.[2] Yet like millions of other Americans, many are now living apart from traditional extended-family networks, and their informal child care arrangements are often breaking down or becoming less available. Parents in the study emphasized that in looking for child care they hoped not only for accessible and affordable programs, but homelike places where Spanish is spoken, and where their own family and cultural traditions and values would be reflected and honored.

This study helped to confirm the California Child Care Initiative's view that culturally-based, Spanish-speaking family day care was an ideal kind of service to help develop in Latino communities. But although the Initiative already had a successful family day care recruitment and training model that had been used throughout the state since 1985, we recognized that some particular challenges lay ahead in adapting our services to Spanish-speaking providers and families.

Much of our best guidance, from the earliest days, has come from the staff of R&R agencies who had already been reaching out to Latino communities without any special funding or support. To a great extent it was the vision of this dedicated group of people–an R&R Advisory Group representing agencies in twelve California counties–that gave clear direction to our projects and contributed to their success. Our Statewide Advisory Group–including representatives from a wide variety of public and private agencies involved in working with Latino communities–also helped us gather and analyze available resources, and provided a critical perspective on the most pressing needs in the field.

"Nitza, a college-educated woman from Puerto Rico, had been unable to find work that would allow her to stay home with her baby, but she needed to earn money to help support her family. Through our referral service, Nitza was able to start caring for another child in her home while applying for a family day care license. We helped her throughout the licensing process, and she completed both the introductory and advanced training courses, as well as First Aid and CPR."

"Nitza's husband enthusiastically supported her new career, and he attended our family day care tax workshop so that he could help with the business aspects of the program. Participating in the training has helped Nitza personally, economically and professionally: it has connected her with a supportive community of Spanish-speaking women, and it has launched a new career that meets her family's changing needs."

[1] Arnberg (1987); NCBE (1990); RiChiang (1994); Soto (1991).

[2] Fuller et al. (1994).

A Community-Based Approach to Child Care Needs

Parents emphasized that in looking for child care they hoped not only for accessible and affordable programs, but home-like places where Spanish is spoken, and where their own family and cultural traditions and values would be reflected and honored.

Together, these groups constantly reinforced the theme which became El Comienzo's guiding principle: that the project must not be yet another effort *directed at* the Latino community, but rather a process that as much as possible is *based within* it. While the Initiative was bringing to this work a highly successful model of child care recruitment and supply-building, we saw that the model would have to be carefully adapted, in partnership with the community, to particular values and needs.

The project must not be yet another effort directed at the Latino community, but rather a process that as much as possible is based within it.

As one R&R staff member observed, "Everything about our services has to begin with looking at ourselves." In other words, R&R agencies themselves may need to change, by becoming more reflective of the communities they are serving. Many providers and families may be naturally wary of dealing with unknown social service organizations, especially if there are no Latino staff members or if all services are conducted in English. They may also confuse the R&R with the child care licensing agency, the welfare department, or even such legal authorities as the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

As one R&R staff member observed, "Everything about our services has to begin with looking at ourselves"

Our new project needed to confront such institutional barriers from the start, by paying careful attention to how the project and its activities are publicized–and perceived–in the community. A style of outreach that basically consists of translating one's written materials into other languages, without altering the agency's approach and array of services, is no longer effective or acceptable. There is really no better way of building trust than going out into the community and working to establish new relationships based on inclusiveness and respect. A community-oriented child care project must move outward from its home base, taking its child care concerns into new arenas and constituencies in order to enlist broader participation and support.

There is really no better way of building trust than going out into the commuunity and working to establish new relationships based on inclusiveness and respect.

To assess an agency's *cultural competency*, one must ascertain whether the agency is responding to the needs of the diverse children and families in its service area; whether it values the diversity of its client base, and understands and respects the community's many cultures; and whether it plans and provides culturally relevant programs and services. In particular, an agency should compare local demographics with the number of calls it receives from the Latino community, and the number of activities and services targeted to them. Is there a gap? If so, how can the agency change this?

A fundamental task is to attract, train and *retain* bilingual and bicultural staff to carry out project activities and to work

directly with Latino providers and families. For El Comienzo, local R&R agencies also established Community Involvement Committees to build or strengthen their linkages with Latino community leaders and organizations. These have been the best ways of guaranteeing that the project becomes not a short-term "add-on" to an agency's services but an integral, lasting part of its identity and its mission.

Rethinking "Recruitment"

Just as we needed to re-examine old concepts of outreach in developing El Comienzo, our community advisors urged us to rethink our methods of child care recruitment and supply-building.

While more child care providers were definitely needed in some areas, it soon became clear that meeting the child care needs of Latino parents was going to be more complicated than simply recruiting more care. In many cases, there were *existing* Spanish-speaking providers–some licensed, some not–who needed considerable support and training in order to stay in business successfully. Many potential and existing providers were facing language and other barriers when dealing with the state's child care licensing system. Stabilizing the present supply and preventing "turnover" was often as pressing a need as recruitment. In all cases, the demand for Spanish-language services and materials was a primary issue for providers and R&R staff.

We therefore envisioned El Comienzo as a project that would operate on two tracks in most communities, developing activities targeted to existing as well as new providers. This becomes particularly important in neighborhoods where parents seem to have difficulty finding good care even though there are providers with vacant spaces. Providers' schedules, or the age groups they serve, may be a factor; for example, there may be a undersupply of infant, toddler or school-age care, but an oversupply of care for three- and four-year-olds. Affordability of care is often a barrier, one that yields no easy answers. And there may also be concerns among parents that some family day care programs are of insufficient quality.

A critical starting point of "recruitment," then, may be to reach out to current providers, in a tone of partnership and dialogue, rather than "fixing", to assess their needs for training and technical assistance in such areas as business skills, publicizing their service, creating learning environments in the home, and health and safety issues. One-on-one assistance and home visits with new and existing providers became a central part of El Comienzo's activities. The particular challenges and barriers which R&R agencies faced, and how they responded to them, are discussed more fully in Chapter Four.

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CHAPTER 2

Resource Publications for Recruitment and Training

Since child care resource and referral agencies were so often struggling to provide services in Spanish without having high-quality, culturally appropriate Spanish-language materials to work with, El Comienzo launched its activities in 1991 with an extensive six-month literature search. Child Care Initiative staff communicated with over one hundred trainers and community leaders nationwide in order to collect available materials and to learn from others' experiences in developing child care programs in Latino communities.

This literature search led to the publication of *Recursos/ Resources*, a bibliography of family day care recruitment and training materials in Spanish from throughout the United States and Canada. But while many useful materials had been developed on a variety of topics, none met the need for a comprehensive, coordinated package of recruitment and training resources that was rooted in Latino cultures and that addressed the specific needs of family day care providers. Quite the contrary: many materials were "part of the problem"–poorly translated, visually unappealing, and lacking in any experience-based understanding of Latino communities. Indeed, many people we spoke to during our search urged us to develop a new series of resource materials as soon as possible, because communities across the country were experiencing the same urgent needs.

We were continually advised that any new materials we developed must be culturally authentic, not merely a translation of resources available in English. As a result, our materials have sought to respect and reinforce culturally-based learning styles and customs; are written in non-colloquial, standard Spanish to ensure their usefulness to all native Latino cultures (i.e., from Mexico, Central and South America and the Caribbean); and aim for a straightforward, nonacademic style that is not too informal or simplistic. Recognizing that reading and writing skills may vary widely among project participants, we have also sought to keep the materials interesting and readable for adults with a broad range of literacy levels.

The publication series is visually unified by consistent design motifs and typography, and by a vibrantly bright color scheme of yellow and purple. While draft editions produced during the first year were illustrated with line drawings, we have now switched to photographs in order to portray the widest possible variety of Latino children, parents and providers in a more realistic style.

Our first training publication, *El Comienzo*, focuses on the practical matters of starting a family day care program, becoming licensed, and operating a successful small business. To make this start-up resource packet as flexible and adaptable as possible–for orientation meetings, workshops, home

Reflections from the participants in the CCIP El Comienzo training continued to support the need for additional resources in Spanish. As one delighted trainer remarked, "It's not silver, it's not gold, it's diamonds!"

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visits, and other training formats–we produced *El Comienzo* as a briefcase-style kit, with a series of folders inside containing loose-leaf materials on various topics. This flexibility has also allowed us to keep legal and other information up-to-date–for example, recent changes in child care law that were prompted by the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In addition, the format allowed local sites to add their own materials.

Child Care Initiative staff communicated with over a hundred trainers and community leaders nationwide in order to collect available materials and to learn from others' experiences in developing child care programs in Latino communities.

Some of the materials in *El Comienzo* were newly written by Child Care Initiative staff, while others were adapted from materials produced by local R&R agencies, California state agencies, the Child Care Law Center, and other organizations. The kit contains four folders of information:

El Inicio de Cuidado Infantil Hogareño (Starting a Family Day Care Program) includes materials on the child care licensing process in California, a copy of the licensing regulations newly translated into Spanish, and various articles to help prospective providers assess whether family day care will be an appropriate career choice for themselves and their families.

Practicas Efectivas Para Su Negocio (Effective Business Practices) includes materials on record-keeping, taxes, child care contracts with parents, and financial planning.

Planificación del Medio Ambiente (Planning Your Home Environment) offers a variety of articles on arranging a home environment to be suitable for group child care, and on choosing appropriate toys and equipment for young children.

Salud y Seguridad (Health and Safety) is devoted to materials on first aid, securing emergency help through 911, common childhood illnesses, cultural issues regarding traditional medicine practices, immunizations, and child abuse and neglect.

Our next publication, written entirely by Initiative staff, was a more comprehensive training manual on working with children and their families–*Esto Es Familiar: Una Guía Para el Cuidado Infantil Hogareño ("It's a Family Affair: A Guide to Family Day Care in Your Home"). Esto Es Familiar*, which is now distributed as part of the *El Comienzo* kit, contains six chapters:

Que Es El Cuidado Infantil Hogareño? (What Is Family Day Care?) discusses basic definitions, the growing child care needs of Latino families, and ways to help one's own family adjust to having a child care program in the home.

Trabajando Con Los Padres (Working With Parents) includes a discussion of family diversity, admitting new families to one's program, parent/provider communication, and handling conflicts.

Trabajando Con Los Niños (Working With Children) covers such topics as the provider's role in children's early development, suggestions for family day care activities with an emphasis on learning through play, arranging the home space for child care, planning a daily schedule, children's diverse languages and cultures, guidance and discipline, caring for children of different ages, and selecting toys and other equipment. The chapter also includes a simple chart outlining the basic stages of child development.

Salud y Seguridad (Health and Safety) offers more detailed information on accident prevention, first aid, preparing for emergency situations, what to do when children are ill, preventing the spread of conta-

gious diseases, child abuse and neglect, and ways in which providers can take care of their own health.

Alimentos y Nutrición (Food and Nutrition) covers children's daily nutritional needs, ways to turn meal and snack times into opportunities for learning, tips on cutting food costs and saving time, and information on the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

Su Carrera Como Proveedora de Cuidados Infantiles (Your Child Care Career) encourages providers to think of themselves as professionals and to explore such options as joining child care associations, earning a credential or accreditation, and taking part in ongoing workshops, classes, conferences and other learning opportunities.

For recruitment and outreach purposes, the project also developed two brochures in Spanish, because of an identified need to educate both parents and providers about the link between licensing and child care quality. The first–*Dé a Sus Niños La Comodidad de Un Hogar (Give Your Children the Comforts of Home)*–is addressed to parents, urging them to consider licensed family day care as a viable, quality child care option. The other brochure–*Abra Su Casa, Abra Su Corazón (Open Your Home, Open Your Heart)*–is targeted to current and potential providers, emphasizing the benefits and requirements of child care licensing, as well as the support services available from their local R&R agencies. Both brochures are camera ready to be localized by a participating R&R agency with its own logo, address, phone number, and other contact information.

During the first year of use, all these materials were reviewed by a wide variety of Spanish speakers working in the child care field, including a National Review Team convened to discuss the project. The trainers, providers and R&R staff who used the materials in field-testing throughout California in the project's first year also offered us a wealth of valuable feedback. The current editions of both *El Comienzo* and *Esto Es Familiar* have been extensively revised. The changes included a rearrangement of the chapter/folder divisions; the introduction of many new documents and materials, particularly on providers' career development and infant and toddler care; and the use of photographs.

The trainers, providers and R&R staff who used the materials in field-testing throughout California in the project's first year offered us a wealth of valuable feedback.

Most recently, the Child Care Initiative has published an English-language *Trainer's Guide to El Comienzo and Esto Es Familiar*, keyed to the material in each of the chapters of those publications. We developed this guide because we understood that a number of project coordinators had little or no direct training experience, and it became an important tool for their own professional development. The guide emphasizes a culturally-based active learning approach to adult education, including ways to foster critical thinking and personal reflection; suggestions for hands-on, experiential activities; methods to help students apply newly-learned information and skills in a practical manner; approaches to evaluation; and options for finding further training resources in the community.

The project developed two brochures in Spanish because of an identified need to educate both parents and providers about the link between licensing and child care quality.

CHAPTER 3

Site Selection and Project Management

Since its inception in 1985, the California Child Care Initiative has been managed and coordinated by the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network. The purpose of this statewide-level management model has been to ensure fiscal and program accountability, to give the Initiative access to funding sources and partnerships that would otherwise be inaccessible to local R&R agencies, and to lend the program a broader identity and visibility.

The Initiative has also been characterized by a high degree of local autonomy in the design of projects. While the components of all projects are based on the five-part model described in the Introduction, they have been implemented in a wide variety of ways to meet locally assessed needs. This flexibility, coupled with a somewhat prescriptive request-for-proposal process, has helped the Initiative and participating agencies to design thoughtful and well-planned approaches to local child care needs.

In 1992, the Initiative launched a new phase of El Comienzo, in which it funded nine R&R-based demonstration projects to build the supply of high-quality family day care in a variety of urban and rural Spanish-speaking communities throughout the state. The two-year projects focused not only on recruiting and training *new* providers, but on improving the quality and stability of *existing* child care services, offering extensive training and assistance to help current Latina providers stay in the business. In 1994, a second group of four agencies was also selected to conduct two-year projects.

In applying to participate in El Comienzo, resource and referral agencies were asked to demonstrate their readiness to conduct recruitment, training and technical assistance activities for Spanish-speaking providers. The four main criteria for evaluation were:

1) an agency's existing linkages with the local Latino community;
2) its plans to enlist the active collaboration of a diverse and representative Community Involvement Committee;
3) the presence of bilingual and bicultural staff to take leadership in project activities; and
4) the ability and willingness to raise matching funds.

After reviewing proposals, the Network staff then worked with each site to negotiate modifications in plans. In some instances, for example, recruitment and training goals seemed too high; budgets appeared to include too little staff time; or the proposed staff were going to be carrying too much continued responsibility for other agency projects.

The Demonstration Sites

The following nine agencies were selected to conduct El Comienzo demonstration projects from January 1992 through December 1993:

"Rosa joined El Comienzo through our introductory training course. Participating in the project has helped make Rosa's dreams a reality: she now has a new profession and her own business. While helping to support herself and her husband in this country, she can also work toward creating a stable home here for their two young children, who are still living with her parents in Guatemala. Rosa has taken advantage of everything our project has to offer, from licensing help to introductory and advanced training courses, First Aid and CPR."

"Building on this training, she has also sought out opportunities elsewhere in the community, such as a Sesame Street workshop offered by the local PBS station. Rosa has found a community of support with other women in the project and has emerged as a leader within this group—one who readily shares her own enthusiasm and ideas, and who encourages others to do the same."

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BANANAS, Inc., Oakland, serving northern Alameda County, which also includes the cities of Berkeley and Richmond. Founded over 20 years ago, BANANAS has increasingly been providing multilingual services for the growing Latino, Chinese-American and other communities in its service area and beyond.

Child Action, Inc., Sacramento, serving a diverse urban, suburban and rural county with a Latino population of roughly 125,000—nearly one-quarter of whom are children under the age of 12.

Children's Council of San Francisco, serving this large cosmopolitan city with a Latino population of over 100,000—approximately 18% of whom are under 12 years old.

Child Care Resource Center of the San Fernando Valley, North Hollywood, serving northwest Los Angeles County, which has experienced a growth of 33.5% in the Latino population since 1980.

Community Resources for Children, Napa, serving a small agricultural county north of San Francisco which has experienced a rapid increase in Latino population over the past decade, many of them migrant agricultural and service workers who have come from Mexico.

Economic Opportunity Commission/Child Care Resource Connection, San Luis Obispo, also serving a rural area with a large population of predominantly Mexican-American agricultural and service workers, many of whom are seasonal migrants.

Community Coordinated Child Development Council of Santa Clara County, San Jose, serving a rapidly-growing urban and suburban area which is experiencing a particularly acute gap between supply and demand for child care services for Latino residents; over half the population of central San Jose is Mexican-American.

Child Care Coordinating Council of San Mateo County, San Mateo, serving a combination of suburban and rural coastal communities south of San Francisco with an 18% Latino population, many of whom work in agriculture or are unemployed.

Mexican American Opportunity Foundation, Los Angeles, an agency established nearly 30 years ago, serving a urban/suburban area with an 80% Latino population, many of whom are poor, unemployed, or working in service or manufacturing industries.

More recently, a second group of sites was selected to conduct El Comienzo projects for a two-year period beginning in April 1994:

Crystal Stairs, Inc., Los Angeles, primarily serving South Central Los Angeles, an historically African-American community which has become roughly 45% Latino in recent years. Employment and economic development projects have become an acute need for this Latino community, particularly its women and children, who have higher rates of poverty and unemployment than all other ethnic groups in the area.

Riverside County Office of Education, Riverside, focusing its project services on the rural Coachella Valley and outlying desert areas of the county, which have a Latino population of nearly 95%. Coachella has been identified as one of the poorest cities in the United States, with an average family income of $8,500, and has a very low supply of licensed child care services.

Marin Child Care Council, San Rafael, serving a suburban and rural coastal county north of San Francisco, and focusing its project on the "Canal

District" of San Rafael, which has a 46% Latino population and many poor and/or unemployed families. Currently, there are only 160 child care spaces in the community for an estimated child population of 1,800 to 2,000.

Solano Family and Children's Council, Fairfield, serving a suburban and rural county north of San Francisco which is one of the fastest-growing in California. Roughly 16% of the county's child population is Latino, but the Latino population is dispersed over a wide area rather than concentrated in particular communities.

In helping these sites develop local projects, the California Child Care Resource and Referral Network found it especially important to help each agency develop realistic and appropriate expectations for success. The agencies divided roughly into two groups. The first were sites that were relatively new to the process of working with Latino families and providers, but which demonstrated some readiness and potential for success even though they were not yet highly visible in their local Latino communities. These agencies particularly needed to prepare for the likelihood of getting off to a slow start. The second group were sites which had already had long-established commitments and activities in the Latino community; these, on the contrary, needed to prepare themselves for a sometimes overwhelming response to their newly-added services.

The varied activities and experiences of the project sites are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

Support and Coordination for Local Sites

A unique and important factor in the success of El Comienzo projects has been the centralized coordinating and training role played by the statewide Network. The Network's support services included:

1) establishing guidelines for project components;

2) centralized training for project coordinators in recruitment, training, technical assistance and ongoing support activities for family day care providers;

3) telephone consultation and site visits;

4) facilitation of sharing of experiences and resources among project sites; and

5) collection and distribution of resource materials.

The Network held training sessions twice each year which brought project coordinators together to share their successes and challenges, and to work together to solve common problems. The Network enlisted experienced California Child Care Initiative staff from previous projects and used outside consultants and community groups to conduct training on such issues as marketing local projects, recruitment campaigns, fundraising, using the media, training family day care providers for business success, and developing women's eco-

The California Child Care Resource and Referral Network found it especially important to help each agency develop realistic and appropriate expectations for success.

nomic self-sufficiency. Sites were unanimous in reporting that these support services were very helpful.

As local projects progressed, sites sent quarterly reports to the Network, along with copies of all resource materials they had developed. We compiled a periodic mailing to sites called *News & Views*, which included summaries of each site's work, innovative ideas and programs, and sample resource materials.

The various levels of accountability for project outcomes, however, and the nature of our preexisting relationships with member agencies, made the working relationships between Network staff and the R&Rs rather complex and intricate. As a membership organization, the Network operates in a context of providing support and leadership to the local agencies as a helpful resource for their work, and in this role, we are accountable to the R&R agencies we serve. On the other hand, we are also accountable to funders for successful outcomes of overall Child Care Initiative projects, and the R&Rs who receive matching funds for Initiative projects such as El Comienzo are accountable to us for project implementation. And in some cases, local funders added requirements of their own for outcomes and reporting, in addition to those set by the Network.

The various levels of accountability for project outcomes, however, and the nature of the Network's preexisting relationships with its member agencies, made the working relationships between Network staff and the R&Rs rather complex and intricate.

Our Network role in offering training, technical assistance and support was an easy fit with our preexisting relationships with the R&R agencies. But issues which required negotiation with the R&Rs, or intervention when projects had difficulties, proved to be more challenging. Building trusting relationships between project coordinators and Network staff was critical; the goal throughout was a teamwork approach grounded in mutual respect, acknowledgment of differing perspectives, and a commitment to finding "win/win" solutions to problems.

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Funding and Fundraising for El Comienzo

The California Child Care Initiative is funded through a highly successful model of public/private partnership. Over the course of its ten-year history, the Initiative has raised more than $7 million from public and private sector funders, with contributors ranging from large corporations and state and local government bodies to small businesses and individual donors. For El Comienzo, as with all other Initiative efforts, local resource and referral agencies received central project grants from the California Child Care R&R Network which they were then required to match through their own public/private fundraising efforts. (See the accompanying chart of contributions to local projects. See Appendices 2 and 3 for a list of contributors.)

In addition to the more "altruistic" motives of community improvement, the interest of local businesses and corporate funders in the Initiative has of-

Demonstration Project Funding

COUNTY/NAME OF R&R AGENCY	YEAR 1 BUDGET	YEAR 2 BUDGET
Alameda Co. - BANANAS	$17,227	$20,000
Los Angeles Co. - Child Care Resource Center	$20,000	N/A
Los Angeles Co. - MAOF	$20,000	$15,000
Napa Co. - Community Resources for Children	$21,550	$19,250
Sacramento Co. - Child Action, Inc.	$14,464	$14,741
San Francisco Co. - Children's Council	$15,000	$18,750
San Luis Obispo Co. - Child Care Resource Connection	$21,450	$24,350
San Mateo Co. - 4 C's of San Mateo	$25,900	$20,775
Santa Clara Co. - 4 C's of Santa Clara County	$20,720	$20,000

ten been linked to their perception that the project's family day care recruitment and training efforts may benefit their employees. Some R&R agencies participating in El Comienzo are long-standing community-based organizations that already had strong links to local corporate donors, foundations and government bodies, and were able to build onto this past record of collaboration in seeking support for a special focus on Latino providers and families.

In Sacramento, for example, Child Action approached a city councilman for his endorsement of the project, requesting a letter that would help the agency raise funds for El Comienzo. He was extremely receptive, and during the two-year project period he also campaigned to become mayor of the city and won the election. As Mayor of Sacramento he has continued his involvement with El

Some R&R agencies participating in El Comienzo are longstanding community-based organizations that already had strong links to local corporate donors, foundations and government bodies.

Comienzo, and has continued to help the agency develop new funding contacts and recruit new members for its Community Involvement Committee.

Other communities, however–particularly rural areas–have tended to lack the economic base to develop matching funds as readily. Even with its history of connections to Migrant Head Start funding and other school-based resources, for example, the Riverside agency found it extremely challenging to raise funds for its project in the Coachella Valley. It became necessary for the agency to broaden its efforts to a number of employers, including armaments contractors for the Department of Defense, that it had not approached before. As the project entered its second year, the agency was also able to obtain federal Child Care and Development Block Grant funds.

Two sites, as noted above, were unable to complete the two-year project period. Internal and external barriers both played a role, either with funders becoming less willing to participate in the effort, or with fundraising growing so much more difficult that the agency became unable to commit sufficient resources and time. Anti-immigration sentiments stirred up during the 1994 election, particularly against Mexican-Americans, leading to the passage of Proposition 187, also made fundraising more difficult in some areas, and apparently made some providers more wary of participating in El Comienzo, perhaps out of fear

Second Cycle Project Funding

COUNTY/NAME OF R&R	YEAR 1 BUDGET	YEAR 2 BUDGET
Los Angeles Co. - Crystal Stairs, Inc.	$50,000	$50,000
Marin Co. - Marin Child Care Council	$50,000	$50,000
Riverside Co. - Riverside Co. Office of Education	$50,000	$50,000
Solano Co. - Solano Family & Children's Services	$20,600	N/A

of becoming "part of the system" and vulnerable to attack.

The San Fernando Valley agency found it difficult to hire a bicultural and bilingual staff member for the project; when continued fundraising for a second year became problematic, the agency decided not to reapply for the project. In Solano County, the Latino community is widely dispersed throughout the area and highly disenfranchised, with few strong support networks. The R&R agency, for its part, was unable to offer enough staff time and agency resources to ease fears about Proposition 187 and maintain its relationships with trainees and recruits. By the end of the first year, in early 1995, it decided that there was not enough community support for a second year of funding.

It must also be acknowledged that two agencies in the central valley, California's agricultural heartland, were unable to apply for El Comienzo because they considered the fundraising task impossible. Despite the large Latino population working in agriculture in the central valley, the major growers were completely resistant to supporting a child care project, and there were no other significant philanthropic resources in the area to draw upon. In the future, it may be necessary for the Initiative to develop fully-funded projects in certain communities, and there are also implications for California-based and national foundations, which should perhaps devote more attention to grantmaking in such underserved rural areas.

In fundraising for Child Care Initiative projects, R&R agencies have also found it essential to plan from the beginning how they will make the transition at the end of the project's funding period. An agency must continually evaluate which activities it will want to retain, with or without new or continued funding, and which might be lower priorities. To the fullest extent possible, however, all the agencies participating in El Comienzo have sought to make their Spanish-language activities a long-term part of their mission and services, rather than viewing them as a short-term project. Since "one-shot" projects are rarely likely to succeed in reaching out to new communities, this kind of extended agency commitment has been critical.

In fundraising for Child Care Initiative projects, R&R agencies have also found it essential to plan from the beginning how they will make the transition at the end of the project's funding period.

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Data Collection and Reporting

The Network set high standards for project documentation and data collection, both as part of our accountability to funders and in the interest of demonstrating the success of the project model. Each site collected data on its project activities and participants, and made quarterly fiscal and statistical reports. Each site collected demographic profiles of providers, recorded each provider's participation in project activities, and reported the number and types of recruitment, start-up and training activities it of-

While the extensive recordkeeping and reporting requirements for the pilot phase of El Comienzo were not always popular with the project sites, the sites were often able to use the information for their own local fundraising and publicity purposes as well.

Data Collection Forms

Participant Profile
Initial Participant Questionnaire
Provider Exit Interview
Telephone Office Visit Log
List of Licensed Recruits
Trainer's Evaluation Report
"El Comienzo" Evaluation
"Esto Es Familiar" Evaluation
Fiscal Report
Statistical Service Report
Participant Training Evaluation
Narrative Report

fered. Trainers and providers completed evaluation forms on workshops, training courses, and the resource materials *El Comienzo* and *Esto Es Familiar*. Each site also responded to a set of narrative questions from the Network twice a year.

The above chart lists the data collection and reporting documents used by the project. While the extensive recordkeeping and reporting requirements for the pilot phase of El Comienzo were not always popular with the project sites, the sites were often able to use the information for their own local fundraising and publicity purposes as well. The information collected also provided a foundation for revising *El Comienzo* and *Esto Es Familiar*, for reporting to funders, and for advocating for the continuation of the project.

Training Events for Project Sites

Throughout the funding cycle, the Network brought staff from El Comienzo projects together on a regular basis. An initial training retreat, held about six weeks after projects had begun, offered a variety of workshops, discussions and panels. Speakers included staff from R&R agencies who had previous experience with the California Child Care Initiative or with related recruitment or training projects. Guest speakers were invited to share their expertise in such areas as cultural diversity, child development, issues affecting the Latino community, fundraising, publicity, media relations, and ways to

help women develop economic self-sufficiency. The training also covered the basics of project administration, recordkeeping and reporting. This initial training retreat gave all project staff a basic shared understanding of El Comienzo, and helped to make expectations clear from the start.

During the two-year project period, R&R staff then met with Network staff for two-day sessions twice a year. Training topics were developed from the needs and interests of the group, based on the issues most commonly faced by trainers and coordinators as their projects unfolded–for example, ways of helping Spanish-speaking providers to form support groups and associations. An emphasis on peer support at these events also helped create bonds among El Comienzo staff that strengthened the local projects.

Between training sessions, the Network conducted site visits and offered technical assistance by phone in order to stay in touch. In particular, we found that project coordinators needed support in the area of provider training. Many were conducting much of the training themselves because experienced bilingual family day care trainers were (and remain) in short supply. The *Trainer's Guide to El Comienzo & Esto Es Familiar* described in Chapter 2 was a direct outgrowth of this frequent need for assistance from the Network. Overall, this ongoing communication between Network staff and coordinators helped projects keep their recruitment and training activities on track and to find timely solutions to difficulties and barriers as they arose.

CHAPTER 4

Project Activities

Recruitment and Community Outreach

The overarching goal of the California Child Care Initiative is to stabilize communities' supply of high-quality family day care-not only recruiting new providers, but just as importantly, helping existing providers to succeed and remain in business.

For El Comienzo, as with other Initiative efforts, carefully targeted recruitment campaigns became the norm, as R&R agencies assessed the specific needs in their communities for additional family day care services. Some R&Rs focused on encouraging "underground" providers to become licensed and to get involved in training and support networks. Others looked to their license-exempt providers, especially those serving parents participating in GAIN (California's workfare program), encouraging them to become licensed in order to take advantage of tax, insurance, and Child and Adult Care Food Program benefits.

The next task became to design services appropriate to the identified needs. It has been important for agencies and "recruits" alike to be realistic about the economic prospects of running a successful family day care business in a given community-and in particular, not to over-recruit when existing providers already have a significant number of openings. But agencies found that shortages of certain types of child care often did exist--especially care for very young children. One agency primarily urged new providers to consider specializing in infant and toddler care. Another encouraged providers to offer various other services that were in particular demand, including before- and after-school care, evening care, short-term substitute care for mildly ill children, and care for children with a variety of special needs.

The most effective recruitment and outreach tools in El Comienzo were the following:

Spanish-language public service announcements on radio, in most areas, reached the Latino community far more readily than other media. TV spots and newspaper ads, as well as flyers for posting or mailing, played a secondary but significant role.

Word of mouth was extremely important, as Latina recruits and trainees went on to inform family members and friends about services available in Spanish through the local R&R. As one R&R staff member expressed it, this informal type of publicity "resulted in a process that made our agency much more real in the eyes of the participants' families and friends, and the Latino community in general."

Kick-off news conferences frequently helped projects gain more immediate visibility as they got underway.

A variety of incentives also encouraged many people to participate in El Comienzo. These included providing child care at meetings and training sessions; subsidizing the TB test or fingerprinting fee required by licensing; donating or lending toys and

"Alicia, who is now licensed to care for six children, exemplifies the spirit and dedication that is typical of the women who have joined El Comienzo. She has taken advantage of every single service that is available through our agency, including the El Comienzo training course and workshops, the Child Care Food Program, the Toy and Resource Lending Library, and the Alternative Payment Program that helps her care for children of families receiving public assistance. Alicia is speaking more English all the time. One day she confided to us that she can't attend English classes in the evening because she needs to be at home with her children, so she has bought a set of self-instruction tapes and is making steady progress on her own. The secret to Alicia's achievement seems to be her unrelenting determination to make her business a success."

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books; and distributing donated equipment such as fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, first aid kits, and child-proof locks or gates.

Newsletters, phone calls for technical assistance, and presentations to provider associations and other community groups proved the most helpful in reaching *existing* family day care providers, in order to encourage them to get involved in El Comienzo.

The formation of an active Community Involvement Committee was a mandatory part of each local project and these committees have been critical to El Comienzo's success.

The formation of an active *Community Involvement Committee* was a mandatory part of each local project, and these committees have been critical to El Comienzo's success. Community partners have included many individuals, organizations and agencies that represent and serve Latino families: community centers, cultural centers, churches, family service agencies, migrant service agencies, health centers and clinics, Head Start programs, libraries, community colleges, vocational schools, women's groups, local task forces, elected officials, and reporters from local newspapers and TV and radio stations. Sites generally allowed great flexibility in the kind of participation they asked for, and many community advisors were able to contribute best by taking on very specific tasks rather than attending planning meetings. Some served as mentors for individual providers; others led training workshops, volunteered to recruit in particular neighborhoods, or offered free or low-cost business advice to providers.

The projects were highly successful in reaching their target population. Between January 1992 and December 1993, the nine demonstration sites successfully recruited 282 new family day care providers and trained nearly 5,000 other individuals in Latino communities.

El Comienzo was met with a very high rate of response to its outreach efforts. In fact, additional planning often became necessary so that project staff would not become overwhelmed by too many participants. Issues arose of how to use project resources most effectively and strategically, in order to reach the individuals who were most likely to benefit, because in most areas, many more people responded and participated in training than completed the licensing process. Each agency found it increasingly necessary to help prospective providers assess what they were looking for and what they needed. This often involved establishing particular criteria for how a prospective provider would become able to obtain more in-depth support services, and which people would be especially targeted for training, for example, those whose homes were licensable, and those who had made some level of commitment to the process, by completing and submitting the licensing packet with the agency's help.

The projects were highly successful in reaching their target population. Between January 1992 and December 1993, the nine demonstration sites successfully recruited 282 new family day care providers and trained nearly 5,000 other individuals in Latino communities. Of all project participants, 64% spoke Spanish primarily, with some knowledge of English, while 31% spoke Spanish only. Sixty-eight percent had lived in the U.S. for seven years or longer, and 16% had arrived within the past four years.

Facts About El Comienzo Participants

Age		Work Experience		Other Information	
46 or older	23%	Full-time homemakers	42%	Had spouses who were employed	80%
36 to 45	34%	Work outside the home	39%	Were married	77%
26 to 35	38%	Work part-time	16%	Had a household income under $20,000	54%
Under 25	7%				

A statistical comparison of CCIP recruits (1988) and El Comienzo participants is available in the Appendix.

Sixty-two percent were of Mexican descent, while 12% were from El Salvador, 7% from Nicaragua and 6% from Colombia. Other countries of origin included Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Puerto Rico.

In addition, a secondary but very important benefit of El Comienzo's outreach work was *consumer education*–expanding awareness among Latino parents about the benefits of high-quality family day care, giving information about child care options, and helping to increase the demand among Latino parents for quality care. To some degree the project was also able to reach non-Latino parents who might have been reluctant before to use providers from another culture–whether from concern about being able to communicate with a Spanish-speaking provider, or because of the more deep-seated issues of racism and discrimination which Latino and other minority providers have long faced in finding clients for their services.

Pre-Service Technical Assistance and Training

A close connection with the local R&R agency is one of the main factors that helps new providers succeed. Agencies taking part in El Comienzo found it essential to build personal relationships with each participant from the start–a process that requires a great deal of openness and sensitivity. As one R&R staff member remarked, "We needed to be flexible and responsive to the personal needs, talents and cultural preferences of recruits." Another added, "You have to beware of generalizing about Latinos' culture, needs and personal style. The Latino

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experience in the U.S. is very diverse and multidimensional." Agencies focused intensively on individual relationships through home visits, phone calls for technical assistance, and ensuring the ongoing availability of their project staff to offer support.

A self-assessment process is critical for new "recruits," in order to determine how suitable a family day care career would be to their own and family needs.

A self-assessment process is critical for new "recruits," in order to determine how suitable a family day care career would be to their own and family needs. Agency staff must be clear with prospective providers, *early on,* about the scope and duration of the licensing process, issues about the licensability of each person's housing, and the prospects in a given area for a provider to gain a sufficient pool of customers to "make a go of it" economically–especially since the affordability of child care is a key concern for low-income families. The self-assessment packet included in the *El Comienzo* start-up kit asks such questions as:

Does your family support your plan to start a family day care home?

Will you need to make changes in your home, and if so, how much would they cost? Which rooms in your house or apartment would you use for child care?

Do you have a preference for what age group of children you would care for, and how large a group? What kinds of activities would you enjoy providing for the children?

How much would you need to charge in order to cover your costs and earn a decent income?

Some prospective providers, unfortunately, face obstacles that they can not overcome often because their housing did not appear to be licensable.

Some prospective providers, unfortunately, face obstacles that they can not overcome often because their housing did not appear to be licensable, but they were generally given information about other employment options in the child care field, such as caring for a family's children in that family's home, or working in a child care center. Realistic advice on becoming licensed is essential–and indeed, agencies who were not able to be frank enough with unlikely candidates sometimes ended up "stringing them along," only adding to a recruit's confusion and disappointment by prolonging the process.

Often, involving the whole family in the process of starting a family day care business is important. Some agencies found it especially necessary for their projects to be inclusive of husbands, helping them to share their wives' aspirations and inviting them to take part in training. When Latino men are unemployed themselves, and are facing economic insecurity about living in the U.S., some attention and sensitivity from the project to their needs can be especially helpful.

Project agencies also enlisted the help of experienced family day care providers, creating mentoring and apprenticeship opportunities in which experienced providers serve as trainers, workshop leaders, and individual helpers for new providers. These kinds of partnerships helped to create informal networks and a sense

of community in a very natural way–and they also empowered the "more seasoned" providers by helping them develop new leadership skills. In the second year of its project, for instance, one agency invited its first-year participants to hold tours of their homes, in order to help new recruits learn about designing child care spaces for young children.

A major concern for a Latino-based child care recruiting project, as with any project reaching out to an historically under-served community, is the accessibility and sensitivity of licensing agency staff. This varied widely among different parts of the California. Sensitivity is particularly important for providers who may feel uncomfortable with government agencies in general, have come to expect bias and discrimination, and/or have fears connected with their or their families' immigration status.

Above all, family day care information and regulations must be available *in Spanish*. But while the family day care licensing application forms and regulations have now been translated into Spanish in California, they still require individual interpretation rather frequently. People may not understand all of the terminology being used, even if it is in their own language. Another barrier for Spanish-speaking providers is that when *new* information comes out regarding changes in laws and regulations that affect them, it is often not translated. For instance, while child care providers face new requirements for health and safety training in California, no information is being distributed thus far in languages other than English.

Holding licensing orientation sessions in Spanish–and at the local R&R office or other community location–also makes the process far more comfortable and less threatening. Helping prospective providers fill out their licensing applications together as a group can also ease anxieties. In some areas, at the request of El Comienzo project sites, licensing offices have increased the frequency of their family day care orientation meetings–holding them every two months, for example, rather than quarterly–and in some cases, these have been maintained after the particular project ended. One licensing agency representative became more involved when she realized how difficult it was for Spanish-speaking providers to get oriented and licensed, and offered to conduct a few orientation meetings in Spanish, even at night and on her own time. When it became clear how successful these sessions were, she advocated (with the R&Rs support) for an ongoing, official licensing orientation in Spanish, and these are now held four times a year.

Monolingual Spanish-speaking providers concern many licensing evaluators–particularly with regard to the ability to obtain help in an emergency. One project site was able to overcome this

This ability to refer appropriately to other services is yet another reason why an agency, to participate in a project such as El Comienzo, must be a well-connected part of the Latino community.

concern by holding training sessions on how to use the 911 emergency line.

The licensability of housing, as noted earlier, is also a frequent problem in low-income communities. Even when a home space is licensable, however, providers often need individualized help in troubleshooting and preparing for the licensing evaluator's visit. Landlord issues may also arise, even when legal protections for renters exist. In California, providers are not legally obligated to obtain a landlord's permission to offer child care in their homes, but in some areas, agencies reported that landlords were telling renters they couldn't have a child care program on the premises, and renters were fearful of "rocking the boat" and jeopardizing their living situation. In some cases, it became necessary to recruit legal help and/or mediation services to resolve disputes with landlords.

Each step, each child enrolled, each triumph large or small took time, communication and personal help.

El Comienzo has emphasized active learning-an approach that respects all adults in a group for the ways in which they are already experienced and capable, and that seeks each person's empowerment in her own education.

In many parts of California, as in other states, another major barrier is the length of time it can take for a new provider to receive her license. Because of delays caused by background checks and other factors, obtaining a license can often take four to six months–a fact which discourages many recruits and may lead them to drop out of the process. El Comienzo sites tried to anticipate this problem by giving their recruits realistic expectations of the time delay, and by developing a range of training activities to keep participants involved and motivated while they were waiting. A number of sites were also able to influence their local licensors in speeding up the process.

With regard to immigration concerns, recruits have frequently needed reassurance that no problems related to their resident status in the U.S. will result from their being fingerprinted or licensed for family day care, or visited in their homes by a licensing evaluator. Such reassurance has been particularly difficult to offer, however, amidst the recent climate of fear and suspicion raised by California's Proposition 187 and other political events. One agency reported that eight out of ten providers called in to the R&R when the licensing evaluator was coming to visit, and most often, their fears were related to past experiences with the immigration system. For their part, R&R staff may also have certain fears at first about becoming embroiled and/or liable in clients' immigration or other legal issues.

The process of helping a new provider become licensed and get underway in her business can be very labor-intensive and time-consuming. But as one R&R staff member expressed it, "Things done well take time," and that is especially true for this project, because clients often felt overwhelmed by the challenges of language as well as their unfamiliarity with the child care system and the state bureaucracy. It took extra patience on the part of the participants and the staff to set aside time to learn and to follow through. Each step, each child enrolled, each triumph

large or small took time, communication and personal help.

"And something we *re*-learned in this project," she added, "is that when you begin to provide specific help to clients, you will often be asked for many additional types of information and help. We couldn't have been successful without being open and supportive, nor would we have wanted to. But we found that participants then came to our staff for other kinds of support as well–family problems, financial advice, and so on. Some of this non-project support can be integral to your success, but you may have to define and draw lines between business and personal issues, and set some boundaries." This ability to refer appropriately to other services is yet another reason why an agency, to participate in a project such as El Comienzo, must be a well-connected part of the Latino community.

Training and Preparation for Long-Term Success

El Comienzo has emphasized an *active learning* approach to the training of family day care providers. This is an approach that respects all adults in a group for the ways in which they are already experienced and capable, and that seeks each person's empowerment in her own education. In an active learning situation, students are recognized as *partners* who are helping to teach each other, and are enlisted in assessing their own training needs. Trainers seek to use a variety of methods that welcome and encourage each person's active participation–including hands-on, experiential activities, as well as opportunities for critical thinking, personal reflection, and practical application of new skills. Since literacy skills can vary widely in a group, it is particularly important to develop training approaches that do not depend too heavily on participants' reading and writing abilities. (See *A Trainer's Guide to El Comienzo and Esto Es Familiar* for a more complete discussion of active learning, as well as detailed suggestions for training activities.)

The presence of bilingual, bicultural trainers—who preferably live in the community—is very important in building a sense of welcome and inclusiveness for Latina providers.

The presence of bilingual, bicultural trainers–who preferably live in the community–is very important in building a sense of welcome and inclusiveness for Latina providers. Projects have also aimed to be flexible and accessible by holding classes at a variety of times–offering the choice, for example, between an evening or a weekend training series.

As one trainer for El Comienzo observed, "Ours is a participatory and dignifying approach. The training is a vehicle for providers to come together, explore problems and draw solutions—it is not just focused on disseminating information, but rather on building community and leadership."

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El Comienzo has also helped providers gain better access to their local community college system, and in some cases, earn college credit for their family day care training.

leadership." The group bonds established in training have led providers in several project communities to build local support groups and, in several cases, new family day care associations.

People with a wide range of educational backgrounds came to training events sponsored by El Comienzo. Fifty-nine percent had earned less than a high school equivalency (G.E.D.), while 27% had completed some college or vocational school, 7% had Associate Degrees, and 9% had four-year degrees.

Each of the El Comienzo sites aimed to develop a coordinated range of training options for new and existing Latina providers. For example, one site held a basic entry-level family day care course, consisting of four three-hour sessions, twice a year. The site also hosted an advanced training course for more experienced provider and other "stand-alone" workshops and activities to enhance these courses. At all sites, courses and workshops offered training in business skills, child development and the components of high-quality group child care, appropriate discipline, health and safety, first aid and CPR, and setting up a learning environment in one's home.

Ongoing support and technical assistance to providers is critical, expecially in promoting business success and continued financial viability.

Training in business skills, including the issues of taxes, recordkeeping, insurance, marketing and the collection of parent fees, has been an especially important focus of El Comienzo–not only helping women build a sense of competence and independence, but serving to legitimize and professionalize the family day care field as a whole. The use of contracts with parents, written in

Irvine Foundation Grant Extends Impact of El Comienzo

With the help of a grant from the Irvine Foundation, the Network was also able to offer training events and resources to other member R&R agencies which were not part of the demonstration project but which were interested in developing services for Latino providers and families. Three two-day training seminars, held during May 1992 at different locations in northern, southern and central California, were attended by representatives of 33 agencies. The seminars included a discussion of the California Child Care Initiative's five-part child care supply-building model; barriers facing Spanish-speaking family day care providers; Spanish-language training resources; and innovative ways of delivering training to underserved populations. These non-funded agencies were later able to train over 500 current or potential Spanish-speaking family day care providers with the help of El Comienzo's resource materials and technical assistance services.

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the language that child care arrangements are negotiated in, has also been a strong emphasis. Projects have found it very worthwhile to link their activities with Hispanic Chambers of Commerce and other local specialists in small business development. In one community, one of the agency's community partners, a Latino consultant working with the local college's Small Business Development Center, is now offering free business advice to "new entrepreneurs" in the area.

El Comienzo training has also helped providers gain an understanding of the child care subsidy system, so that Latino providers and parents alike can access any available sources of support. Ninety percent of El Comienzo trainees have participated in the federal Child and Adult Care Food Program.

The project has also taken advantage of other local training opportunities. One agency, for example, sponsored 15 providers' attendance at an Infant-Toddler Caregiving Conference at a nearby state university, and arranged for providers to take part in training on science activities for preschoolers at the local science museum.

Finally, El Comienzo has also helped providers gain better access to their local community college system, and in some cases, earn college credit for their family day care training. One agency worked with a community college to develop a child development training series which also functioned as an ESL (English as a Second Language) class. Often, such classes have continued to be offered by community colleges after the project period has ended, becoming integrated into the overall curriculum available there.

Beyond their initial training courses, El Comienzo sites have focused much of their attention on the *retention* of new and experienced providers in the field. Ongoing support and technical assistance to providers is critical, especially in promoting business success and continued financial viability. Sites often found that "vulnerable" providers needed individual help in business management; only one-third of existing providers, for instance, reported that they advertised their business in any way. The other most important factor in provider retention is the presence of support groups and informal networks, in which providers can call and visit each other for help and advice.

One agency described the retention issues of family day care in this way: "The factors making for a successful recruit include her temperament and determination to become licensed, her economic and family stability, and the support of family members. There are also some very practical considerations, such as whether she has an upstairs or ground-level facility. Our successful recruits are resourceful, self-directed and ambitious. They have nurturing, resilient personalities.

"El Comienzo has solidified our Spanish-language outreach and technical assistance program, and has truly established us among the Spanish-speaking community as the place to go for child care-related issues."

"...the number of monolingual Spanish calls to the agency has increased at least 50% since the start of the project."

Some also have some economic security, so they can afford to wait awhile for their fledgling businesses to take off. But neither do we consider our 'drop-outs' to be 'failures.' Many of them faced serious economic obstacles, especially during California's long recession, and some lived in substandard housing–but most planned to return eventually to the child care field."

"It is clear from the visits we've conducted that 'graduates' exhibit a true pride in their profession and take their work very seriously"

In a survey of which El Comienzo services from the R&R agencies they had found most helpful, providers listed marketing workshops, toy lending libraries, the chance to visit and tour other family day care homes, group meetings with other providers, and social gatherings such as year-end celebrations and provider recognition events.

Lasting Impacts of El Comienzo on R&R Agencies and Communities

Although El Comienzo's Spanish-language recruitment and training projects formally conclude after a two-year period, each site has sought ways to integrate such multilingual services into their ongoing mission. As one agency staff member notes, "El Comienzo has solidified our Spanish-language outreach and technical assistance program, and has truly established us among the Spanish-speaking community as the place to go for child care-related issues. Another beneficial side-effect is that it enabled us to establish a library of child development materials and books in Spanish; that was just a dream before, but now it's a permanent reality. The project also afforded us the ability to offer at least one course per year in Spanish for college credit–a first in our community." Another site found that "the number of monolingual Spanish calls to the agency has increased at least 50% since the start of the project."

In addition, as noted earlier, the project has led to a number of improvements in the family day care licensing system, with regulations, forms, information and group orientations now available in Spanish; orientations held more frequently; and increased sensitivity to Latino community issues among licensing staff.

Perhaps most importantly, ongoing family day care associations for Latina providers associations are now in place in a number of project communities, in which providers help each other–and often, the R&R agency–by serving as mentors, trainers and advisors. One provider recruited by the project, for example, now serves on the R&R's Board of Directors as a representative of the Latina family day care association.

"Our greatest success," observes another R&R staff member, "is the professionalism instilled by the project. It is clear from the visits we've conducted that 'graduates' exhibit a true pride in their profession and take their work very seriously.

"Our greatest success," observes another R&R staff member, "is the professionalism instilled by the project. It is clear from the visits we've conducted that 'graduates' exhibit a true pride in their profession and

take their work very seriously.

Their approach toward their business is very different from providers who started out on their own, they have clear ideas about advertising, contractual agreements, age-appropriate activities, and multicultural awareness and sensitivity. In short, they have their 'acts together,' and we're proud that we were able to help."

Mariana, who came to San Francisco from Nicaragua with her family four years ago, had never worked in child care before. After struggling for about two years, she was able to build a successful child care program.

When our staff first visited her home, Mariana had a license for 12 children and her program was always full. Nevertheless, she knew that she needed to improve her business skills and her understanding of child development, and she started to work with us. She put together a contract and distributed it to all the parents, explaining that she was going to take college courses in early childhood education, that her whole family was going to become First Aid/CPR certified, and that her rates would be increasing after six months. All of the parents welcomed the changes; some even supported her decision by increasing their payment immediately. After a year, with our help, she also became a trainer of other family day care providers—the first provider in our county to do so. She has a model program that is visited regularly by many other people; she runs a training series on professionalism and the business of family day care; she heads the local providers' association; and she is a dynamic advocate for providers' rights.

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CHAPTER 5

Observations and Conclusions

The purpose of this report has been to provide the child care community and other professionals with a general understanding of issues involved in building high-quality family day care in Latino communities in the United States. The following is our summary of key considerations for groups who would like to develop culturally responsible services to meet the child care needs of Latino families.

A project to recruit and train Spanish-speaking family day care providers must grow strong roots in the Latino community.

El Comienzo is, above all, a community-based approach to meeting the child care needs of Latino families. In order to establish credibility and trust, any agency undertaking such a project should have bilingual and bicultural staff who are connected to the Latino community and to other Latino-serving organizations. In the current social climate of increasing bias and resentment against immigrants, establishing such credibility and trust is more important than ever.

All agency staff, whatever their backgrounds, should demonstrate a commitment to multicultural diversity and a readiness to navigate cultural differences with colleagues and clients. Honoring and preserving children's and providers' home languages and cultures should be seen as an essential element of quality child care.

Especially in areas in which an agency is less experienced, the project should emphasize collaboration and partnership with other groups and individuals in the Latino community and beyond. "Talking to the community" before the project begins is indispensable, not only to collect information but to gain broader support and commitment from community partners. El Comienzo benefited immensely from convening focus groups of people already experienced in working with Spanish-speaking providers, in order to better assess needs, approaches, barriers and opportunities.

Committed staff and resources are critical to the success of the project.

Throughout our experience with El Comienzo, we have found that local agencies' success has been proportionate to the energy and commitment they devote to integrating the project into their overall mission—creatively rethinking *everything* they do in light of Latino community needs. El Comienzo should not be thought of as a short-term effort. Funding, in particular, should be geared toward institutionalizing services for the Latino community well beyond the initial project phase—whether within the agency or through

the initial project phase—whether within the agency or through another organization.

Adequate staffing is fundamentally important. We have found that the project responsibilities must not be simply "add-ons" to other job duties for existing staff, because such a situation will only lead to frustration and the inability to meet goals and objectives in a timely way. Instead, for each staff member, the project should be the equivalent of at least a two-thirds-time or, preferably, a full-time position. And whether or not the project is headed by a lead agency, as in the California Child Care Initiative's resource and referral network model, certain essential administrative functions must also be assumed by one of the project agencies or partners. These functions include the assessment of child care supply and demand in project communities; assessment of providers' training needs; creation of funding partnerships and community collaborations; training of trainers; data collection; and project evaluation.

Activities to recruit and train providers must match clearly identified needs.

Meeting the child care needs of Latino parents is more complicated than simply recruiting more care. In many communities, there are existing Spanish-speaking providers, whether licensed or not, who need considerable training and support in order to stay in business and succeed. It may be most helpful to conceive of El Comienzo as a two-tiered project, developing activities that are targeted to existing as well as new providers.

A project should also be prepared for a potentially heavy influx of participants, since in many communities this type of service has not been offered before. Choosing a target group, such as unlicensed providers or residents of particular neighborhoods, may be very important. Honesty and clear communication with prospective providers–combined with a self-assessment process about their own economic, family, housing and other issues–should help participants determine *early on* whether family day care is likely to be a successful career choice. Each agency should also define appropriate limits to their roles with providers, especially in situations in which providers and their families present multiple and complex needs. It is here where project staff will most need to connect with other community resources, in order to be able to refer clients to other organizations that can assist them.

Ideally, an agency undertaking El Comienzo should already be somewhat experienced in community outreach, recruitment and provider training. Particularly if it is a largely non-Latino organization, the agency should have a credible track record within the child care arena that can help it bridge any communication gap

benefited from the past successes of the California Child Care Initiative's family day care supply-building model, and from their own community visibility as resource and referral organizations.

Training materials and activities must be culturally sensitive and appropriate to the needs of adult learners.

A project's resource materials must be culturally authentic, not merely a translation of resources available in English. They should respect and reinforce participants' learning styles, customs, and levels of literacy. The materials should also be flexible and adaptable so that local agencies (and participants themselves) can add other relevant information.

El Comienzo has emphasized an active learning approach to provider training—one that respects all adults in a group for the ways in which they are already experienced and capable, and that seeks each person's empowerment in her own education. Building a personal relationship with each trainee is critical; especially during the licensing and start-up process, one-on-one practical assistance is often best. As frequently as possible, experienced providers should also be enlisted as mentors and workshop leaders. Above all, trainees should be active partners in assessing and obtaining what they need and want from the learning process.

* * * * *

We hope that this report has been helpful and informative to you as you embark on your own effort to meet the child care needs of Latino families in your community. We appreciate your interest, and we look forward to assisting you further in any way we can. Finally, we wish you *un buen comienzo*—a strong beginning along the way.

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Demographic Comparison Between 1988 Providers and El Comienzo Providers

	AGE OF PROVIDERS		MARITAL STATUS		EDUCATION			PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT		SELECTED PREVIOUS OCCUPATIONS		
	Under 35	Over 35	Married	With Employed Spouse	Less Than High School	Four-year Degree	Graduate Degree	Home-makers	Employed Outside the Home	Clerical & Office Work	Service Occupations	Child Care Work
1988 PROVIDERS	67%	33%	82%	95%	2%	12%	10%	27%	67%	23%	2%	21%
EL COMIENZO PROVIDERS	40%	60%	77%	80%	2%	5%	54%	42%	55%	0%	30%	30%

Significantly more El Comienzo providers had been homemakers during the year prior to their involvement in the Initiative project. There were striking differences in the types of jobs held by the two groups of providers. The El Comienzo providers were much more likely to have been food preparation workers, agricultural workers, sewing machine operators, and house cleaners. None of the 1988 providers held these types of occupations. Training that emphasized start-up and management was important to the El Comienzo providers.

Although there were not great differences in the percentage of married providers with working spouses, the El Comienzo providers had much lower income than the 1988 providers, making the income derived from caring for children even more important. The disparity of incomes is even greater when inflation is taken into account between 1988 and 1993.

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El Comienzo Demonstration Sites (1992-1993) - Local Match Funding

COUNTY/NAME OF R&R AGENCY	YEAR 1 1992	AMT.	YEAR 2 1993	AMT.
Alameda Co. - BANANAS	Women's Foundation	$5,000	Trio Foundation	$5,000
	United Way of the Bay Area	3,302	United Way of Alameda County	4,000
	BankAmerica Foundation	3,000	Bank of America/BankAmerica Foundation	3.000
	Matthew Bender & Co., Inc	850	Matthew Bender & Co., Inc.	1,000
	First Presbyterian Church of Oakland	680	Such A Business, Inc.	900
	Thomas Cuttilo & Priscilla Myrick	500	Peet's Coffee and Tea	500
	Peet's Coffee and Tea	500	TRW Financial Systems, Inc.	500
	Such A Business, Inc.	500	BANANAS Inc., Board of Directors	350
	TRW Financial Systems, Inc.	500	Charcoal Companion, Inc	250
	Anonymous Donor	260	TAP Plastics, Inc.	250
	TAP Plastics, Inc.	250	Pacific Gas & Electric Company	200
	Charcoal Companion, Inc.	200	109 Individual Donors	4,050
	Pacific Gas & Electric Company	100		
	19 Individual Donors	1,585		
Los Angeles Co. - Child Care Resource Center of the San Fernando Valley	Los Angeles Educational Partnership	$10,000	N/A	
	United Way - No. Los Angeles Region	10,000		
Los Angeles Co. - Mexican American Opportunity Foundation	Nissan Motor Corporation, USA	$10,000	El Pollo Loco	$10,000
	So. California Edison Company	10,000	Mexican American Opportunity Foundation, Board of Directors	5,000
Napa Co. - Community Resources for Children	Napa County Employment Training Office	$5,000	Napa Valley Family Homes	$5,000
	North Bay Early Intervention Local Planning Area	3,000	North Bay Early Intervention Local Planning Area	3,000
	Community Resource for Children, Board of Directors	3,000	Pacific Gas & Electric Company	3,000
	Mervyn's	3,000	Bank of America/BankAmerica Foundation	2,500
	Bank of America/BankAmerica Foundation	2,500	Napa National Bank	2,500
	Napa Valley Family Homes	2,050	Community Resource for Children, Board of Directors	1,250
	Napa National Bank	1,500	Chef & Child Foundation	1,000
	Pacific Gas & Electric Company	1,000	Chevron	1,000
	Sutter Home Winery	500		
Sacramento Co. - Child Action	Child Action, Inc., Board of Directors	$5,000	Child Action, Inc., Board of Directors	$4,000
	Mervyn's	5,000	Mervyn's	3,400
	Child Action Local Community Fundraiser	1,956	Bank of America/BankAmerica Foundation	2,500
	Child Action Raffle	608	American Marketing/Mervyn's	2,500
	Labor Management Cooperation Trust	500	Phyllis Laurtizen	500
	Phyllis Laurtizen	500	Progresso Corporation	450
	Sacramento Bee	500	Investment Services Company	350
	Investment Services Company	200	Sacramento County Latino Caucus	116
	Progresso Corporation	200	35 Individual Donors	925

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El Comienzo Demonstration Sites (1992-1993) - Local Match Funding

San Francisco Co. - Children's Council	The San Francisco Foundation	$15,000	Mayor's Office of Children, Youth & Their Families	$18,750
San Luis Obispo Co. - Child Care Resource Connection	Mervyn's United Way of San Luis Obispo Pacific Gas & Electric Company Mid-State Bank Bank of America/BankAmerica Foundation County of San Luis Obispo City of San Luis Obispo Kiwanis Club of Bay-Osos, Inc. Home Savings of America Monica Johnson California Autobody Association - San Luis Obispo Chapter Ziatech Corporation	$5,000 5,000 4,000 2,500 2,500 1,350 500 200 100 100 100 100	United Way of San Luis Obispo Mervyn's Pacific Gas & Electric Company Bank of America/BankAmerica Foundation Mid-State Bank Laura Lent City of San Luis Obispo, Human Relations Commission Southern California Gas Women of the Moose Home Savings of America	$8,000 5,000 4,000 2,500 2,000 1,500 1,000 200 100 50
San Mateo Co. - Child Care Coordinating Council of San Mateo County	Levi Strauss Foundation Mervyn's Junior League of Palo Alto, Inc. 4 Cs of San Mateo County, Board of Directors	$10,000 10,000 5,000 900	Levi Strauss Foundation Mervyn's Child Care Coordinating Council of San Mateo County, Board of Directors	$10,000 10,000 775
Santa Clara Co. - Community Coordinated Child Development Council of Santa Clara County	David & Lucile Packard Foundation Lockheed Missiles & Space Co., Inc. Mervyn's Hitachi Micro Systems, Inc. Hitachi Foundation	$10,000 5,000 5,000 400 320	David & Lucile Packard Foundation 4 Cs of Santa Clara County, Board of Directors Lockheed Missiles & Space Co., Inc. Bank of America/BankAmerica Foundation	$7,500 5,000 5,000 2,500

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El Comienzo Second Cycle Sites (1994-1995) - Local Match Funding

COUNTY/NAME OF R&R AGENCY	YEAR 1 1994-95	AMT.	YEAR 2 1995-96	AMT.*
Los Angeles Co. - Crystal Stairs, Inc.	Ralph M. Parsons Foundation Los Angeles Women's Foundation	$15,000 10,000	Child Care Food Program Crystal Stairs, Board of Directors	
Marin Co. - Marin Child Care Council	Marin Community Foundation	$25,000	Marin Community Foundation	
Solano Co. - Solano Family & Children's Services	Solano Family & Children's Services, Board of Directors The Children's Network of Solano Co., Board of Directors Bank of America/BankAmerica Foundation Exxon Benecia Refinery Alza Corporation NorthBay Hospital Group	$3,000 3,000 2,500 1,000 500 300	N/A	
Riverside Co. - Riverside Co. Office of Education	Target Stores	$25,000	County of Riverside, Community Development Block Grant Target Stores Coachelle USD Healthy Start City of Indio, Community Development Block Grant Armtec CCIP Advisory Community Fund JFK Hospital Betty Williams Development	

** Grant amounts are not yet verified.*

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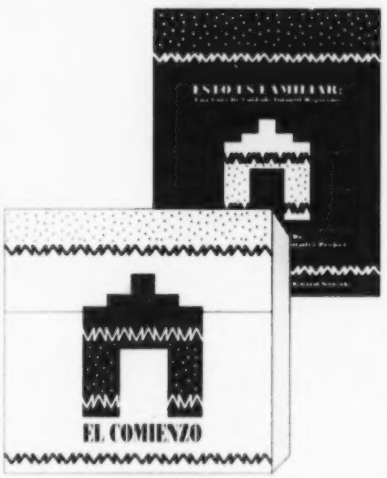

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